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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jail Escape Internal Investigation Results Released

On 07-12-12, at approximately 1448hrs, inmate Jeremy Mask, age 25, facilitated an escape from the Black Hawk County Jail by entering a general population pod fire tower. Following an 18 hour man hunt and a nearly 50 minute vehicle pursuit, inmate Mask was taken into custody and presently resides in the maximum security area of the Black Hawk County Jail.

A full internal investigation has been conducted on the events leading up to the security breach and several issues were discovered which contributed to the escape. The following information is not provided to excuse any action or inaction on behalf of the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office, but more to provide insight into the findings of the investigation and our initial responses to ensure that this occurrence does not happen in the future.

As was released previously, there were two separate contractors accessing the housing level making security upgrades within the housing units of the jail on the day of the escape. An internal fire tower door was found to have been left open during this work. The housing unit officer was aware of the breach and allowed inmates into the dayroom of the housing unit anyway. To remedy this error in the future, effective immediately, no inmate will be allowed out of their assigned cell when substantial security or maintenance

**A CRIMINAL CHARGE IS MERELY AN ACCUSATION AND THE DEFENDANT IS PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND
UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.**

work is being conducted in the housing unit, and at no time will the inmates be released from their individual cells when a security door is open during such work.

Inmate Mask was able to convince a master control technician that he was associated with building maintenance via intercom to gain release through the first floor fire tower door. To eliminate this error in the future, emergency exit procedures have been altered. The substance of these changes will not be further discussed. Additional cameras are also being contemplated on all exterior doors of the facility.

In addition to the listed errors and erroneous judgments made by staff, several existing policies and procedures were also found to have been violated. Staff employees intimate with the escape have been dealt disciplinary action ranging from unpaid suspension, up to and including termination of employment. While these matters are personnel related no further details will be shared regarding discipline.

The rarity of such an occurrence must be punctuated and the unique circumstances merging together simultaneously cannot be understated. However, the staff and administration of the Black Hawk County Jail accepts full responsibility for the breach and for the mitigation necessary to ensure no such event occurs in the future.

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